

Message Text

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ORIGIN ABF-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 A-01 MMO-01 SIG-03 ARA-10
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DRAFTED BY A/BF/OAG;JHSOUTHERLAND:SB

APPROVED BY M:BHREAD

A:JMTHOMAS

M/MO:IMEALUM

A/BF:DLWILLIAMSON

S/IG:MSMITH

EUR/EX:DLEIDEL

EA/EX:JMORAN

ARA/MGT:WCALDERHEAD

GAO:ESTAATS (IN DRAFT)

-----104614 160742Z /11

R 160036Z AUG 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MANILA

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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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STADIS//////////

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR EEC; VIENNA ALSO FOR IAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AGAO

SUBJECT:EXPANDED ROLE OF GAO AND GAO VISITS TO SELECTED
POSTS

FOR AMBASSADORS AND PRINCIPAL OFFICERS FROM BEN READ

1. CONCERNS EXPRESSED AT RECENT EUROPEAN COM MEETING IN
LONDON AND A REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE U.S. GENERAL
ACCOUNTING OFFICE INDICATE THAT THE NUMBER OF VISITS CON-
DUCTED OVERSEAS HAS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY AND EXPANDED
INTO AREAS NOT PREVIOUSLY DEALT WITH. AS LEGISLATIVE
ACTIONS OF THE CONGRESS CONTINUE TO ASSIGN NEW INVESTIGA-
TIVE AND EVALUATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE GAO, COMP-
TROLLER GENERAL STAATS HAS REDIRECTED AGENCY'S EFFORTS
INCREASINGLY TOWARDS MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE U.S. THE GAO'S
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CURRENT LIST OF PROJECTS REFLECTS THE INCREASING INTERESTS
OF THE CONGRESS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INCLUDES THE FIELD
OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS, FOREIGN MILITARY ASSISTANCE,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, NARCOTICS AND REFUGEES TO MENTION
JUST A FEW EXAMPLES. AT THE EXPRESS INTEREST OF THE COMP-
TROLLER GENERAL, THE GAO HAS RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN MORE
INTENSIVE STUDIES TO OBTAIN COMPARATIVE DATA FROM DEVELOPED
INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES OF EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST FOR
COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR U.S. GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

2. THE EVOLVING ROLE ASSIGNED TO THE GAO HAS OBVIOUSLY
NECESSITATED CHANGES IN THE TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED BY
THE GAO AND AN INCREASE IN GAO VISITS TO SOME OVERSEAS
POSTS. IN A FEW CASES MULTIPLE OR OVERLAPPING GAO VISITS
COULD RESULT IN TAXING THE LIMITED MISSION RESOURCES.
THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL HAS ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES TO
KEEP THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSIES FULLY INFORMED OF GAO'S
PLANS AND ONGOING WORK. EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO PRO-
VIDE INFORMATION WELL IN ADVANCE AS TO THE PURPOSE OF
GAO REVIEWS, AND THE FOREIGN OFFICIALS, IF ANY, THAT GAO
WISHES TO MEET. CONTACTS WITH FOREIGN NATIONALS WILL BE
MADE THROUGH EMBASSY CHANNELS AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS WILL

BE ADVISED OF INFORMATION OBTAINED AND TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS, IF ANY, BEFORE THE GAO STAFF LEAVES THE COUNTRY. EMBASSY OFFICIALS ARE NOT ONLY INVITED BUT ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ANY MEETINGS BETWEEN GAO AND FOREIGN NATIONALS. WITHIN A FEW DAYS BEFORE RELEASING A REPORT WHICH CAN BE EXPECTED TO EVOKE A REACTION ON THE PART OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY, GAO WILL COMMUNICATE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT WHICH IN TURN THE DEPARTMENT WILL CABLE TO THE EMBASSY. GAO ALSO PLANS TO SEND THOSE EMBASSIES WHERE IT HAS SIGNIFICANT CONTACTS MONTHLY LISTINGS OF ITS REPORTS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS TO THE SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO GAO AND TO THE CONGRESS.

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3. TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES INVOLVED AND IN STRENGTHENING TRADITIONALLY CLOSE STATE-GAO RELATIONS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR REVIEW OF GAO ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY DURING THE TWO YEAR PERIOD ENDING JULY 30, 1978, AND YOUR COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. FREQUENCY AND TRENDS OF GAO VISITS. WHAT HAS BEEN THE FREQUENCY OF GAO VISITS FOR EACH OF THE YEARS IN QUESTION? WHAT HAS BEEN THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY AT EMBASSY AND CONSTITUENT POSTS? COMMENT ON THE TRENDS IN FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF VISITS. ARE THE DURATION OF THE VISITS REASONABLE? ARE GAO TEAMS THE OPTIMUM SIZE AND COMPOSITION (AUDITORS VS OTHERS, ETC)? CAN YOU SUGGEST MEANS FOR IMPROVING EFFICIENCY OF VISITS, E.G. THE SUBMISSION OF ADVANCE QUESTIONNAIRE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF VISIT AND POINTS TO BE RAISED WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR OTHERS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF GAO TEAM?

B. DEMANDS ON POST'S RESOURCES. COMMENT ON THE REQUIREMENTS MADE BY THE GAO TEAM WHEN THEY VISIT THE POST, E.G. DOES POST PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION, SECRETARIAL, OR

OTHER SERVICES? ARE OVERTIME PAYMENTS TO STATE PERSONNEL INVOLVED?

C. REACTION OF HOST COUNTRY TO GAO VISIT. WHAT IS THE GENERAL REACTION TO VISITS BY GAO REPRESENTATIVES? DO GAO TEAM MEMBERS SEEM TO BE QUALIFIED AND CONDUCT MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS? HAVE GAO PERSONNEL BEEN TACTFUL IN ELICITING INFORMATION AND DATA FROM NATIONAL AND LOCAL OFFICIALS? HAVE GAO REPRESENTATIVES REQUESTS FOR

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LAWS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS BEEN RELEVANT TO THE VISIT?

WHAT SUGGESTIONS OR CONTROLS, IF ANY, HAS POST
ESTABLISHED GOVERNING SUCH CONTACTS?

4. THE POINTS CITED ABOVE OBVIOUSLY DO NOT COVER ALL
ASPECTS OF GAO VISITS. THEREFORE, THE DEPARTMENT WOULD
WELCOME ANY ADDITIONAL RELEVANT COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS
FROM THE FIELD REGARDING GAO VISITS.

5. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING RESPONSES TO
THIS MESSAGE BY SEPTEMBER 15. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 16 aug 1978
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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Remarks:
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From: STATE
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TAGS: AGAO
To: ANKARA ATHENS MULTIPLE
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